François de Salignac
de la Motte Fenelon,
born at the Castle
of Fenelon in the
province of Peri-
gord, August 6
1651.

Educated at
Cahors, and at
Paris. and took
Orders in 1675.
His first Cure

being the Parish
of St Sulpice.
In 1689 he was
made Tutor to the
Grandsons of Louis
XIV. the Dukes of
Burgundy, Anjou
and Berri.
In 1695 he was
consecrated by

Bossuet. Bishop of
Meaux, Archbishop of
Cambray.
Telemachus the
work by which he
is best known was
first published in 1699.
but his other works were
numerous and excellent.
He was a learned man

and his manners
and disposition were
most amiable and
exemplary.

He died at his
residence at
Cambray in
January 1718 in
the 64th year of
his age.

B M

Epitaph on W. G.

to

Catherine Trollope

Mary, widow of the
late Captain A. W.
Trollope died at Paris
July 9 1822.

Their children died at
Auteuil on April 22
1826.

Born at Backleberry,
Berkshire March 31
1737.

B M

Cambray's

REFLECTIONS.

—

Price 8*d. in boards.*

OCT

PIOUS

REFLECTIONS

for

EVERY DAY

of the

MONTH.

Translated from the French of
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B M

PIOUS REFLECTIONS, &c.

FIRST DAY.

Of the scarceness of true faith.

I.

" When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" *Luke* xviii. 8. If he should now come, would he find it in us? What fruits

of faith have we to shew? Do we look upon this life only as a short passage to a better? Do we believe that we must suffer with Jesus Christ, before we can reign with him? Do we consider this world as a deceitful appearance, and death as the entrance to true goods? Do we live by faith? Does it animate us? Do we relish the eternal truths it presents us with? Are we as careful to nourish our souls with those truths, as to maintain our bodies with proper diet? Do we accustom ourselves to

see all things in the light of faith? Do we correct all our judgements by it? Alas! the greater part of Christians think and act like mere heathens. If we judge (as we justly may) of their faith by their practice, we must conclude they have no faith at all.

II. Let us fear, lest the kingdom of God should be taken from us, and given to others, who may bear better fruits. "That kingdom of God" is faith reigning in us, and governing all our thoughts. Happy he, who has eyes to

see this kingdom. Flesh and blood cannot discern it. The wisdom of the animal man is wilfully blind to it. The inward operations of God appear as a dream to him. To know the wonders of God's kingdom, we must be born again; and to be born again, we must die: this is what the world cannot consent to. Let the world then despise and censure, and condemn the truth, as it pleases: as for us, O Lord, thou hast commanded us to believe, "and to taste thy heavenly gift."

We desire to be of the number of thine elect, and we know that no person can be of that number, who does not conform his life to what thou teachest.

SECOND DAY.

Of the only way to heaven.

I. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," *Matt.* vii. 13. The kingdom of heaven is not to be entered but by violence: it must be taken, as it were, by assault, like a besieged place. The gate is strait and narrow, we must bow, we must bend, we must make ourselves little to gain admittance. The great gate, which opens wide, and is passed by multitudes, leads to perdition. All broad and smooth ways

are dangerous. Woe to us, when the world favours us, and our life seems void of trouble. Crosses and difficulties are the surest marks of the way to heaven. Let us be aware, therefore, of going on with the multitude, and let us seek the traces of the few; let us follow the footsteps of the saints along the craggy paths of repentance; climbing over the rocks, seeking secure places in the sweat of our face, and expecting that the last step of our lives should still be a

violent struggle to enter the narrow gate of eternity.

II. We are not predestinated by God, but to be made conformable to the image of his Son; to be fastened, as he was, to a cross; renouncing, as he did, all sensual pleasures; and to be content, like him, in the midst of sufferings. But, blind as we are, we would get down from this cross, which unites us to our Master. We cannot leave the cross, but we must also forsake Christ crucified; for the cross and he are insepar-

able. Let us then live and die with him, who came to shew us the true way to heaven; and let our only fear be, lest we should not finish our sacrifice on the same altar, whereon his was consummated. Alas! all our endeavours here tend to be more at ease, and thereby to withdraw ourselves from the true way to heaven. We know not what we do. We do not comprehend the mystery of grace, which joins a beatitude with tears, pronouncing the mourners happy. The

way which leads to a throne, is delightful, altho' it should be overgrown with thorns. The way which leads to a precipice is dreadful, altho' it should be covered with roses. We suffer, but we see heaven open: we suffer, but we chuse to suffer: we love God, and are beloved of him.

THIRD DAY.

Of true devotion.

I. How frequently do men deceive themselves by that vain religion, which St. James warns us of, chap. i. 26. Some think it consists in saying over many prayers; others, in doing many outward works to the glory of God and service of our neighbour. Some place it in continual desires of salvation, and others in great mortifications. These things are all good, and even necessary, to a certain degree,

but none of these is the principal thing, or essence of true piety. That piety by which we are sanctified, and entirely devoted to God, consists in doing his will precisely in all circumstances of life. Take what steps you please, do what good works you will, yet shall you not be rewarded, but for having done the will of the Sovereign Master. Altho' your servant should do wonders, yet if he did not that very business which you would have done, you would not value his performances,

and might justly complain of him as a bad servant.

II. That perfect devoting ourselves to God, from which devotion has its name, requires that we should not only do the will of God, but also that we should do it with love. "He loveth a cheerful giver," and without the heart, no obedience is acceptable to him. We ought to think it a happiness to serve such a master. Let me add, that this devoting ourselves to God, must be habitual; we must be alike resigned to him in

all circumstances, even those that are most opposite to our views, our inclinations, and our projects; and it must keep us in a constant readiness to part with our estate, our time, our liberty, our life, and our reputation. To be effectually in this disposition, is to have true devotion. But as the will of God is often hid from us, there is still one step farther to make in this renouncing ourselves; it is to do the divine will with a blind obedience, I say a blind, but judicious obedience. This is

what all men are obliged to; even those who are most enlightened, and capable to lead others to God, must themselves submit to be lead by him.

FOURTH DAY.

Concerning imperfect conversions.

Some persons, who have been long estranged from God, and are, as it were, at a great distance from him, think their return to him perfect, as soon as they have taken a few steps towards it. The most

polite and sensible men are, upon this occasion, as ignorant and absurd, as some country clown, who should think himself well at court, because he had seen the king. They have forsaken the more heinous kind of vices, their way of living is less criminal than it used to be. And then they judge of themselves, not by the gospel (the only sure rule) but by comparing their present life with their former. By these means they persuade themselves, that they are in a safe condition; and take no

farther care for their salvation. This state, perhaps, is more dangerous, than that of notorious sinners; for the condition of these last may some time or other trouble their consciences, and put them upon endeavours of amendment: but the imperfect conversion of the former, serves only to stifle the remorse of conscience, to give them a false security, and render their malady incurable.

I have examined my past life, saith one, and remarked the faults of it: I read good

books. I go to church constantly, and I say my prayers, as I think, heartily enough. I now refrain from all great sins at least, but I cannot say, that I am so far affected, as to live as if I did not belong to the world, and kept no measures with it. Religion would be too rigorous, if it left no room for some mollifying expedients. The refinements in devotion, which some propose to us, are carried too far, and serve only to discourage men.—Such are the sentiments of a lukewarm

christian, who would purchase heaven at a cheap rate, who considers not what is due to God, nor what it has cost those who have attained the enjoyment of him. A man of this character is still far from a true conversion: he knows neither the extent of God's law, nor the duties of repentance. If he had been to make the gospel, it would have been a different kind of institution, and more indulgent to self-love. But the gospel is unchangeable, and by that we shall be judged at the last day.

FIFTH DAY.

* *Of renouncing the world.*

I. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," 1 *John* ii. 15. How comprehensive are these words! The world is that blind and depraved multitude which Jesus Christ condemns in his gospel, and for which he refused to pray at his death. The world, in one

* The meditation for this day in the French, turns so much upon the different senses of the word *esprit*, which cannot be rendered in English, that it was thought proper to substitute this, taken from another part of the author, in its stead.

word, is all those who love themselves, or the creatures, without regard to God: we are then that world ourselves, as long as we so love ourselves, and seek that in the creatures, which can be found only in God. Happy that apostle, "to whom the world was crucified, and he crucified to the world," *Gal.* vi. 4.

II. What a happiness is it to be convinced, how truly contemptible the world is! He that parts with the world for God, parts but with a trifle; and they are lamentably

weak, who think they have done some great matter in forsaking it. Every christian has already renounced it in his baptism; those who live in the strictest retirement, only keep to that engagement with more precaution than others. To seek the haven is to fly the storm.

SIXTH DAY.

Of patience in sufferings.

I. "In your patience possess ye your souls," *Luke* xxi. 19. The soul loses itself by impatience; whereas, when it submits without repining, it possesses itself in peace, and it also possesses God. To be impatient, is to will what one has not; or not to will what one has. An impatient soul is a slave to passion, having cast off the restraints of reason and faith: what weakness! what error is this! As

long as we *will* the evil we endure, it is not evil; why then should we make it a real evil, by refusing to bear it willingly? The inward peace resides, not in the senses, or inferior appetites, but in the will. It may be preserved amidst the bitterest sorrows, as long as the will continues in a firm resignation. Peace here below consists not in an exemption from suffering, but in a voluntary acceptance of it.

II. To hear your murmuring and repining, it would

seem that you are the most innocent soul living; and that it is great injustice, that you are not admitted into the terrestrial paradise. Remember how you have offended God, and you must acknowledge his righteous dealing with you. Confess to him with the humility of the prodigal son, "Father, I have sinned against heaven. and thee:" I know how I am indebted to thy justice, but I have not myself the courage to discharge the debt. If it were left to me, I should deceive,

I should spare, I should betray myself. But thy merciful hand executes what I should never have had the courage to do; it corrects me in love. Grant also that I may endure with patience its salutary corrections. If a sinner has a just indignation against himself, the least he can do is, to receive the penance which he has not the fortitude to chuse.

SEVENTH DAY.

Of submission and conformity to the will of God.

I. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Nothing is done here, any more than in heaven, but by the will or permission of God; but men do not always love that will, because it is often opposite to their desires. If we sincerely loved this will of God, and only this, we should change our earth into a heaven. We should thank God for every thing, for evil

as well as good; because evil would become good from his hand. We should not then murmur at the guidance of Providence, but approve and adore it. O my God, what do I see in the course of the stars, in the revolutions of seasons, in the events of life, but the accomplishment of thy will: may it also be accomplished in me! may I love it: may it sweeten and endear all events to me: may I annihilate my own, to make thy will reign in me! For it is thine, O Lord, to will, and mine to obey.

II. Thou hast said, O Lord Jesus, of thyself, with relation to thy heavenly Father, "That thou always didst what pleased him," *John* viii. 9. Teach us how far that example should lead us. Thou art our pattern. Thou didst nothing upon earth but according to the will of *thy* Father, who vouchsafes also to be called *ours*. Do thou fulfil his will in us, as thou didst in thyself. Grant, that we, being inseparably united to thee, may never seek to do our own will, but *his*; so that

not only our religious actions, but even our eating, sleeping, conversing may all be done with no other view but that of pleasing him. Then shall our whole conduct be sanctified. Then shall all our deeds become a continual sacrifice, incessant prayer, and uninterrupted love. When, O Lord, shall we arrive at this disposition? Do thou vouchsafe to conduct us thither: do thou vouchsafe to subdue our rebellious will by thy grace, for it knows not what it would have, and nothing is truly

good, but a conformity to *thy* will.

EIGHTH DAY.

Of prayer.

I. "Pray without ceasing, 1 *Thess.* v. 19 Such is our dependance upon God, that we are obliged not only to do every thing for his sake, but also to seek from him the very power so to do. And this happy necessity of having recourse to him in all our wants, instead of being grievous to us should be our great-

est consolation. What a happiness is it, that we are allowed to speak to him with confidence; to open our hearts, and hold familiar conversation with him by prayer! he himself invites us to it; and as St. Cyprian well observes, we may judge how ready he is to give us those good things, which he himself solicits us to ask of him. Let us pray then with faith, and not lose the fruit of our prayers by a wavering uncertainty; which, as St. James testifies, hinders the success of them. The

same apostle advises us to pray when we are in trouble, because thereby we should find consolation; yet we are so wretched, that this heavenly employment is often a burthen, instead of a comfort to us. The lukewarmness of our prayers is the source of all our other infidelities.

II. "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be open unto you," *Matth.* vii. 7. If riches were to be had for asking, with what earnestness, assiduity, and persever-

ance, would men ask for them? If treasures were to be found with looking for, what place would escape their search? If by knocking they could gain admittance to the king's council, or the highest places of preferment, what a knocking should we hear! Divine grace is the only true good, yet the only thing they neglect; the only thing which they have not patience to wait for. The promise of Christ is infallibly certain, and it is our own fault, if we do not find the effect of it.

NINTH DAY.

Of hearkening to the voice of God.

I. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life," *John* vi. 68. 'T is Jesus Christ who must be harkened to: men are no farther to be heard or believed, than as they have the truth and authority of Jesus Christ. Books are only so far good as they teach us the gospel. Let us go then to this sacred source. He therefore only spoke and acted, that we may

hear him, and apply ourselves to study the particulars of his life. Wretched as we are, we follow our own vain thoughts, and neglect the truth itself, whose words give eternal life. O uncreated Word, yet incarnate for me, make thyself understood in my soul! Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth, and desireth to obey thee!

II. Men often say, that they would gladly know what they should do to advance in virtue. But when the Spirit of God has taught us what is to be done, our courage often

fails in the execution. We easily see that we are not what we ought to be; yet we think we do a great deal in barely wishing that we were better. All kinds of wishing or willing, that are not strong enough to make us sacrifice whatever is an obstacle to us in our way to God, pass for nothing. Let us, therefore, no longer hold the truth captive in an unrighteous lukewarmness. Let us hear what God suggests to us. Let us prove the spirit that moves us, to discern whether it be of God;

and if it be, let nothing hinder our obedience. The Psalmist prayed to God, not only to teach him his will, but also to teach him to do it. "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness," *Psalm.* cxliii. 10.

TENTH DAY.

Of the right use of afflictions

I. "They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts," *Gal.* v. 24. The more we fear crosses, the more reason have we to think that we want them: let us not be discouraged, when the hand of God layeth heavy ones upon us. We ought to judge of the violence of our disease, by the violence of the remedies which our spiritual physician prescribes us. It is a great

argument of our own wretchedness, and of God's mercy, that notwithstanding the difficulty of our recovery, he vouchsafes to undertake our cure. Let us then draw from our very afflictions a source of love, of comfort, and trust in God, saying with his apostle, " our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. Blessed are they who mourn, and sow in tears, because they shall reap with ineffable joy the

harvest of eternal felicity.

II. "I am crucified with Christ," said St. Paul; we are fastened to the cross with him, and by him; for his grace keeps us there, and for his sake we choose to continue there, lest by forsaking it, we should part from him. O suffering and adorable Jesus! to whose sacrifice I unite myself, do thou communicate to me, together with thy cross, also thy spirit of love and resignation. Make me think less of my sufferings, than of the happiness of suffering with

thee. Make me love thee, and I shall not fear the cross; and altho' my sufferings should be very great, yet will they not be greater than I chuse to endure.

ELEVENTH DAY.

Of meekness and humility.

I. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart," *Matth.* xi. 29. If any other than Jesus had taught this lesson, the imperfection of the teacher would have furnished us with objections to the doctrine. He therefore taught it himself, and that too by his own example, which is such as should silence all objections; such as should make us adore, be confounded, and imitate. What! the Son of

God descends from heaven to earth, takes a corruptible body, and dies upon the cross, to shame us out of our pride! He who is All, annihilates himself; and I, who am nothing, would be, at least would have others think me, quite other than what I am! What an impudent vanity, and diabolical presumption is this! our Lord saith not, Be ye meek and lowly: but he saith, "I am meek and lowly of heart;" it is enough to know that he is humble, to conclude that we ought to be

so. His example is such an authority, as none may find a dispensation for, much less the sinner, who may well chuse humility, when he has deserved damnation.

II. Our Lord joins meekness with humility, because humility is the source of true meekness. Pride is ever haughty, impatient, and captious; but he who despises himself is content to be despised. He who thinks nothing due to him, will not think himself neglected. The true virtue of meekness is never

the effect of constitution; all appearances of it, that are the product of mere nature, arise from weakness, indolence, or cunning. To be meek towards others, we must renounce ourselves.

To meekness, our Lord adds lowliness of *heart;* it is no speculative conviction he requires, but the real bent and inclination of the heart; it is a lowliness to which the will consents, and which it loves for the glory of God; it is an entire distrust of ourselves, our own parts and abilities,

that we may owe our cure to God alone. To despair at the sight of our own wretchedness is not humility, but a most abominable kind of pride.

TWELFTH DAY.

Of the faults of others.

1. "Bear ye one another's burdens," *Gal.* vi. 2. Charity does not require of us, that we should not see the faults of others, but that we should avoid all needless and voluntary observing them; and that we should not be blind to their good qualities, when we are so sharp-sighted to their bad ones. We should always remember what a change God may every moment work in the most unwor-

thy of men; we should bear in mind the many reasons we have to despise ourselves, and consider that true charity, as it sees all things in the same light that God does, must consequently extend itself to the meanest of his creatures. Grace does not take away our knowledge of what is contemptible, but it teaches us to bear with it in a devout submission to the secret designs of Providence. It does not permit us to humour ourselves in an impatient or disdainful temper; and as it

makes us principally regard, and only rely upon God, so it prevents our being disappointed or provoked at the folly and corruption we see in the world.

II. What if others are weak, is that a reason for your no longer keeping any measure with them? You, that complain of their troubling you, do you give nobody any trouble? You, that are so much shocked at the faults you see, are you yourself without faults? If all, to whom you have been troublesome,

should return the trouble they have had with you, you would be oppressed with the weight. And besides, even supposing that men had nothing to reproach you with, yet consider farther, what obligations you lie under from God, to shew that forbearance towards others, for which you know you have such abundant occasion at his hands.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Of the one thing necessary.

I. "Thou art troubled and careful about many things, but one thing is needful," *Luke* x. 41. We think we have many businesses to do, and we have but one. If that be performed, the others are included in it. If that miscarry, whatever success the others may seem to have, they will all come to nothing. Why should we then divide our heart and our care? O my only business, thou shalt

henceforward be my only care! In the ray of divine light, I will each moment peaceably perform, according to my abilities, what Providence puts in my way. I will be careful for nothing else, because nothing else is my business.

II. "I have finished the work, which thou, O Father, gavest me to do," *John* vii. 4. Each of us should be able to say as much at the day of judgment. I ought to consider the business, which occurs in the daily order of

Providence, as the work which God appoints me; and I should apply myself to it in a manner worthy of God, viz. with exactness, and with tranquillity. I ought not to neglect any thing, or be passionately vehement about any thing, for it is dangerous to do the work of the Lord negligently on the one hand, or on the other, to appropriate it to ourselves by self-love and false zeal: in this last case, we do our actions from a principle of self-will; we are eager and anxious for the suc-

cess, and that under the pretence of seeking the glory of God. Thus self-love disguises itself under the appearance of zeal; and grieves, and is afflicted, when it miscarries in its designs. O God, grant me the grace to be faithful in the action, and resigned as to the success! My only business is to do *thy* will, and to do it *as thy will*, not forgetting thee in the performance of it. It is thine to give my feeble endeavours the success thou pleasest, even none if thou seest fit.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Of preparing for death.

I. "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" *Luke* xii. 20. Deplorable is the blindness of men, who will not think of death, but divert their minds continually from a thing that is inevitable, and which they might render happy by thinking of it. Nothing is so dreadful as death, to those who are fond of life. It is strange,

that the experience of so many ages should not make us judge solidly of the present, and of the future, so as to take proper measures in the one for the other. We doat upon this world, as if it were never to have an end; and we neglect the next, as if it were never to have a beginning.

II. "Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour, as ye think not, the Son of man cometh," *Matth.* xxiv. 44. These words are address- to every one of us in particular. Yet all men (for few

even among persons of piety are to be excepted) reckon upon a long life, and form projects accordingly. And what is the reason of such an obstinate hope of life? it is because we love it passionately. And whence is it that we affect to remove death at such a distance from us? it is because we do not love the kingdom of God, and the grandeurs of the world to come. O gross and stupid mortals, who cannot raise themselves above this earth, wherein, even by their own

confession, they are miserable! The true manner of preparing for the last moment, is to spend all the others well, and ever to expect that.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Of our hopes in eternity.

I. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. What proportion is there betwixt what we do upon earth, and what we hope for in heaven? The primitive christians rejoiced through this hope incessantly: heaven seemed ever open before them. Neither troubles nor disgraces; neither tor-

ments, nor cruel death, could divert them from the view of it. They knew the infinite bounty that was to reward their pains; therefore they thought they could never suffer enough. They were transported with joy, when they were found worthy of some great humiliation; and we, lukewarm souls, we would suffer nothing; and the reason is, because we want those hopes that should support us. We sink under the lightest crosses, even under those that spring from our

pride, folly, or effeminacy.

II. "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy," *Ps.* cxxv. 5. We must sow, that we may reap, and this life is the seed-time; in the next we shall reap the fruit of our labours. The carnal man, lazy and hasty, would reap without sowing. We would serve God at little cost. We would have the ways to him made wide, and smooth, and easy. To hope much, and suffer little, is what self-love aims at. Blind that we are, shall we never see that the king-

dom of heaven suffers violence, and that only those who do themselves violence, are worthy to enter into it? Let us mourn, and be in grief here below, since " blessed are they that mourn :" and woe is pronounced to those, who receive their consolation in this life. The time will come, when all vain joys will be confounded. The world shall weep in its turn, and God shall wipe all tears from our eyes.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Of our daily bread.

I. "Give us this day our daily bread." By this bread is meant not only the bodily food, which Providence supplies us with, but also that nourishment of truth, which he daily provides for our souls; it is the bread "which nourisheth to eternal life:" which makes the soul encrease, and grow strong in the trials of faith. This God allots us each day; appointing precisely those inward

dispositions and outward circumstances, which are most proper to make us advance in faith and self denial; and we receive our daily bread from him, in accepting, as from his hand, all his appointments.

II. Hunger is what gives a relish to food, and makes it digest. Why have we not an hunger and thirst for righteousness? Why are not our spiritual appetites as keen as those of the body? We think the man sick, who has lost his appetite; and so it is with our souls; they languish, and are

in an evil state, as long as they are without a spiritual hunger for that food which cometh from God. The nourishment of the soul is truth and righteousness. To know what is truly *good*, to be filled with it, to be strengthened by it, *that* is the spiritual food, the bread of heaven we are to feed upon. Let us appear before God with the earnestness of beggars, who crave some bread to subsist on. The worst kind of poverty is, not to be sensible of our wants. Let us, therefore, read and

pray with this mental hunger for what should feed our souls; with this vehement thirst for that water which springeth up into everlasting life. Nothing but an earnest and continual desire of instruction, can qualify us for the knowledge of the wondrous things of God's law. Every one receives this knowledge only in the same degree as he desires it. A great degree of this desire is the proper preparation for receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Of inward peace.

I. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you," *John* xiv. 27. All men seek peace, but they seek it where it is not to be found; they seek it in the world, which is ever promising, but can never give us a solid peace: that is the gift of Christ alone, who reconciles the man to himself, subdues the passions, sets bounds to the desires, inspires the

hopes of eternal bliss, and gives the joy of the Holy Ghost, such a joy as persists in the midst of sufferings, and flowing from an inexhaustible source, becomes a perpetual spring of delight, which the world cannot interrupt nor diminish.

II. True peace is not to be found, but in the possession of God; and the possession of God cannot be attained but by faith and obedience: remove all forbidden objects: renounce all unlawful desires: cast off all earnest care and

anxiety: desire only God: seek only God: and then you shall have peace, such a peace as the world shall not be able to disturb. For what can trouble you? Is it poverty, disgrace, disappointments, outward or inward crosses? You should see all these in the hand of God as real favours, which he vouchsafes to give you a share in. Then the world will have a new appearance to you, and your peace prove inviolable

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Of deceitful joys.

I. "I said of laughter, it is mad: and of mirth, what doth it?" *Eccles.* ii. 2. The joys of worldly-minded men are like those of delirious persons, who have lost their reason by distemper. Delusion is the only cause of their pleasure: they think themselves in abundance, when in reality they are quite destitute. Death will end this dream of folly, and, when they awake, they shall be confounded at

their poverty. Miserable, therefore, are those, whom the false pleasures of the world render incapable of true consolation. Let us say continually of such vain "mirth, what doth it?" Nothing is a solid subject of joy, but our hopes of God's favour; all other delight is but a dream.

II. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again," *John* iv. 13. This may be applied to all worldly satisfactions; the more we enjoy them, the more we

want them. The possession of riches does but encrease our thirst of them. Avarice and ambition are more uneasy for what they have not, than pleased with what they have. The enjoyment of pleasure softens the soul, and makes it unsatiable. The more we divert ourselves, the more we want diversion; and it is easier to persevere in a state of fervour and penitance, than to recover it again when we have given way to pleasure and relaxation. Let us, therefore, watch over ourselves,

and abstain from those *waters* which will but encrease our thirst. Let us keep our heart with care, that it be not seduced by the vain joys of the world, which will end only in despair.

NINETEENTH DAY.

Of holy tears.

I. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," *Matth.* v. 4. What new kind of tears are these? (saith St. Austin) they make happy those who shed them. This happiness consists in being afflicted for the wickedness of the world; the many dangers which surround us, and the inexhaustible corruption of our own hearts. It is a great gift of God, to fear losing his love; to fear lest

we should wander from the strait way. The saints shed tears for this. It is difficult to rejoice while one is in danger of losing what one values most, and of losing ones self with it. It is impossible not to be afflicted, while one sees nothing but vanity, error, offences, forgetfulness, and contempt of the God we love. Grief is due to so many sad occasions of sorrow; our grief shall be pleasing in the sight of God. He himself inspires it: his love causes our tears to flow, and he shall

himself wipe them from our eyes.

II. We hear Jesus Christ say, "Woe be unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation," *Luke* vi. 24, 25, and yet men seek mirth and riches. He also saith, "Blessed are they that weep;" yet they fear nothing more than sorrow. We should grieve here, not only for the dangers of our own state, but for every thing that is vain and criminal. We should weep

for ourselves, and for others: all deserve our tears. Happy the tears which spring from grace, which make us disrelish these transitory things, and produce in us the desire of the good things of eternity.

TWENTIETH DAY.

Of worldly wisdom

I. The wisdom of worldly minded men must needs be great, since our Lord assures us, that it is greater than that of the children of God; yet with all its pretensions and fair appearances, it is fatal to those who follow it. This crooked and subtle wisdom is most opposite to that of God, which is ever plain and simple; and what does it avail its professors, seeing they are always taken in their own de-

vices? The apostle St. James saith of this kind of wisdom, that it is *earthly*, *animal*, (or sensual) and *devilish*, James iii. 15. *Earthly*, because it confines its care to the getting or possessing the things of the earth. *Animal*, or sensual, because it seeks only to make provision for gratifying the passions or sensual appetites; and *devilish*, because to the subtilty and penetration of a demon, it joins also the malice. Men so qualified, think to impose upon others, but in the event, they deceive only themselves.

II. Blind, therefore, are all those, who think themselves wise without the grace of Jesus Christ, which only can make us truly wise. They are like those, who in a dream think themselves awake, and believe all the objects they imagine to be true and real: and while they are pursuing their vain projects of pleasure or ambition, (so great is the infatuation that possesses them) they see not what lies in the way before them, sometimes disgrace, always death, judgment, and eternity. These

great objects daily advance, and approach nearer to prophane men; yet they see them not. Their political skill foresees every thing, but the inevitable fall and annihilation of all they set their hearts upon. O mad and infatuated, when will ye open your eyes to the light of Jesus Christ, which discovers the emptiness of all grandeur here below!

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

Of trust in God.

I "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man," *Psalm.* cxviii. 8. Men are ever trusting to one another, to weak friends, to unfaithful servants; yet they fear to put their trust and confidence in God. They will rely upon the hand-writing of some great man, but they will have no assurance in the gospel. The world promises, and they believe; God protests, and they doubt

whether they should believe or no. What a disrespect to him! What a mischief to themselves is this! Let us restore the true order of things, and regulate our confidence by the laws of a true proportion. Let us perform what depends upon us with moderation; and expect what depends upon God without any restriction. Let us repress all hastiness of passion, and all solicitude disguised under the name of zeal; so we shall establish ourselves in God, and become like

Mount Zion, which can never be moved.

II. Our trust in God; with regard to our salvation, should be still more raised and firm. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," said St. Paul upon this account, *Phil.* iv. 13. When I thought I should be able to do every thing, I was incapable of doing any thing; now that I despair of myself, and have no hope left, but in God, I begin to be able to do every thing. A happy weakness this, which makes

me find in God, what is wanting in myself. I glory in my infirmities, and the misfortunes of my life, because they serve to cure my mistakes concerning the world and myself. I ought to think myself happy that his merciful afflictions have reduced me to extremities; since therein I shall receive of his strength, I shall be hid under his wings, and environed with that special protection which he extends to his devout children who have no dependence but upon him.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

Of the depth of God's mercy.

I. "How great is the loving kindness of the Lord our God, and his compassion unto such as turn unto him in holiness!" *Eccles.* xvii. 29. Why do we delay to cast ourselves into the depth of this abyss? The more we lose ourselves therein in faith and love, the safer we are. Let us give ourselves up to God, without reserve or apprehension of danger. He will love us, and make us to love

him; and that love encreasing daily, shall produce in us all the other virtues. He alone shall fill our heart, which the world has agitated and intoxicated, but could never fill. He will take nothing from us, but what makes us unhappy. He will only make us despise the world, which perhaps we do already. He will alter little in our actions, and only correct the motive of them, by making them all be referred to himself. Then the most ordinary and seemingly indifferent actions shall be-

come exercises of virtue, sources of consolation. We shall cheerfully behold death approach, as the beginning of life immortal; and as St. Paul speaks, "we shall not be unclothed, but clothed upon, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life," 2 *Cor.* v. 4. And we shall then discover the depth of God's mercy which he has exercised towards us.

II. Consider, in the presence of God, the effects of that infinite mercy which you have already experienced, the

lights which Christ has given you, the good thoughts he has inspired you with, the sins he has pardoned, the dangers he has preserved you from, and the extraordinary assistance he has afforded you. Endeavour to excite your love towards him by these precious marks of his goodness, add to these, the remembrance of the crosses he has dispensed for your sanctification; for those also are the riches of his mercy, which you ought to consider as signal testimonies of his love. Let a sense

of past favours inspire you with a trust in him for future. Learn from these, that he has loved you too much not to love you still. Distrust not him, but only yourself. Remember that, as his apostle speaks, "He is the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation," 2 *Cor.* i. 3 He sometimes separates these two: his *consolations* are withdrawn, but his *mercies* still continue. He takes away what is sweet and sensible in grace, because you want to be humbled and punished for having sought

consolation elsewhere. Such chastisement is still a new depth of his mercy

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

Of the easiness of Christ's yoke.

I. "My yoke is easy, and my burden light," *Matth* xi. 30. Let not the name of yoke deter us, for 't is the yoke of Christ, and he helps us to bear it; he makes us love it; he endears it to us by the inward charms of righteousness and truth. He gives a disgust for false pleasure, and renders the practice of virtue delightful. He supports the man against himself, frees him from original corruption, and

makes him strong notwithstanding his weakness. What fearest thou, O man of little faith? let God exert himself in thee. Abandon thyself to him. You shall suffer, but you shall suffer with love and inward tranquillity. You shall fight, but you shall gain the victory: the Lord himself shall fight for you, and reward your success. You shall weep, but your tears shall be pleasing, and God shall himself wipe them from your eyes. You shall be restrained from following your pas-

sions, but after a free sacrifice of your liberty, you will find another kind of liberty, unknown to the world, and more valuable than universal empire.

II. What blindness is it to fear engaging too far with God! The more we love him, the more we shall love his commandments. That love will comfort us in losses, sweeten our crosses, set us free from all other dangerous affections, make us see even through a cloud of afflictions the mercy that dispenses them

to us, and make us discover in death itself eternal glory and bliss. What then are we afraid of? Can we have too much of God? Is it a misfortune to be freed from the heavy yoke of the world, and to bear the light burden of Jesus Christ? Do we fear to be too happy, too much delivered from ourselves, from the caprices of our pride, the violence of our passions, and the tyranny of this deceitful world?

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

Of false liberty.

I. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," 2 *Cor.* iii. 17. The love of liberty is one of the most dangerous passions of the heart of man, and it happens with this, as with the rest of the passions, it deceives those who follow it; and instead of true liberty, it reduces them to the hardest and most infamous servitude, for what else can we call the life of worldly men? What do they

endure to obtain and preserve the good opinion of those whom at the same time they despise? What trouble have they to stifle th se passions, which they would controul, and gratify those which they would indulge, to hide their inward vexations, and save appearances? Is this the liberty we are so fond of, and which we are so unwilling to sacrifice to God? Where is this liberty to be found? I see nothing but constraint, but base and unworthy subjection, but a wretched ne-

cessity of disguising ourselves; we refuse ourselves to God, who desires us only to save us, and we give ourselves up to the world, which can only enslave and ruin us.

II. It is thought the men of the world do nothing but what pleases them, because they have a relish for the passions they indulge; but those who think this, do not consider the irksomeness, the loathings and disappointments, inseparable from a pursuit of pleasure; and the many contradictions and mor-

tifications which attend the greatest preferments. The outside appears pleasing, but within is vexation and disquiet. Men think freedom consists in depending on no body but one's self; this is an extravagant mistake; there is no such state, there is no condition wherein a man does not depend on many others, wherein he is not more obliged to follow their fancies than his own. All the commerce of life is a perpetual confinement by the laws of good-breeding, and the necessity of

humouring others; and, besides, our own passions are the worst of tyrants: if you obey them but by halves, 't is a perpetual strife and contest within; and if you quite give up yourself to them, 't is horrid to think to what extremities they will lead. May God preserve us from that fatal slavery, which the mad presumption of man calls liberty! Liberty is to be found only in him; "his truth shall set us free," and make us experience, that to serve him is to reign.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

Of the perfect devoting of ourselves to God.

I. "Lord what wouldest thou have me to do?" 'T was St. Paul's enquiry when he was struck to the earth by miracle, and converted by the grace of that Jesus whom he had persecuted. Alas! how often have we persecuted him by our infidelities, our humours, and our passions, which have withstood the works of his mercy in our hearts? At last he has struck

us down by tribulation; he has crushed our pride; he has confounded our worldly wisdom; and put self-love in a consternation. Let us now, therefore, say to him with a perfect resignation, "Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do? Hitherto my return to thee has been very defective. I have used many evasions, and endeavoured to save all I could from the total sacrifice which I ought to make to thee. But I am now better disposed, and desire that thou mayest become the

absolute master of my life and actions.

II. Nor is it sufficient that the oblation we make to God be universal; 't is of no service, while it continues loose and uncertain, without descending to particulars, and being ratified by practice. Good purposes cost nothing, and are worth nothing, if we do not put them in execution. We must desire our perfection with greater earnestness, than we ever sought a temporal good, and not do less for God, than we have already

done for the world. Let us search our hearts: am I determined to sacrifice to God my strictest friendships, my most confirmed habits, my most prevalent inclinations, and most agreeable diversions?

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

Of the terms men would make with God.

I. "How long will ye halt between two opinions?" 1 *Kings* xviii. 21. "No man can serve two masters," *Matth.* vi. 24. Men know, if they would be saved, they must love and serve God: but they would fain separate from that love, and that service, whatever is burdensome; and leave only what they like. They would serve him on the terms of giving him only words and

ceremonies, and of those cere-
monies, only such as are not
too long and tedious. They
would love him on the terms
of loving, with him, and per-
haps above him, things which
he has forbidden and con-
demned. They would love
him on the terms of dimin-
ishing nothing in that blind
self-love, whereby, instead of
referring themselves to God,
by whom, and from whom
they exist, they, on the con-
trary, refer God to themselves,
and betake themselves to him
only as a source of comfort,

when the creatures fail them. They would serve him and love him on the terms of being sometimes ashamed of him, and not venturing to give him any more than the world shall allow and approve of. What kind of love and service is this?

II. God will admit no other terms with us, but those which we covenented in our baptism, wherein we promised to renounce the world for his sake. His first and great commandment requires that we should love him undeserv-

edly with our whole heart and mind, and strength. Can he be said truly to love God, who pays a great deference to the world his adversary, against which he has denounced so many judgments? Can he be said to love God, who is afraid of knowing him too much, lest he should be too far engaged in his service? Can he be said to love God, who satisfies himself with not affronting him, and takes no pains to please him, nor is zealous for an opportunity to serve him? God sets no lim-

its to his love towards us, and, therefore, our returns to him should be of the same nature.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Of spending our time well.

1. "Let us do good while we have time," *Gal.* vi. 10. "The night cometh in which no man can work," *John* ix. 4. Time is precious, but men know not its true value; nor will they learn it, till it is too late. Our friends ask it of us, and we bestow it as if it were nothing worth: nay,

sometimes it is a burden we want to get rid of; yet the day will come when, we shall think one quarter of an hour more valuable than all the treasures of the earth. God, most liberal and bounteous of all other things, teaches us, by the frugal dispensation of providence, how careful we ought to be to make a good use of time, because he never gives us two moments together, nor grants us a *second*, till he has withdrawn the *first*, still keeping the *third* in his own hand, so that we are

in a perfect uncertainty whether we shall have it or no. Time is given us to prepare for eternity, and eternity will not be too long to regret our lost time, if we have made an ill use of it.

II All our life, as well as our heart, is due to God: they are neither of them too much for him. He gave them only, that we might love and serve him. Let us, therefore, rob him of nothing. We cannot every moment do great matters for him, but we may always do what is proper for

our condition. To be silent, to suffer, to pray, when there is no room for outward action, is an acceptable offering to God. A disappointment, a contradiction, an injury received and endured for God's sake, is of as much value as a long prayer; and the time is not lost, which is spent in the practice of meekness and patience. But for this we must be cautious, that those interruptions do not happen by our own fault. Thus we should regulate our life, and "redeem the time, as St. Paul

speaks, flying from the world, its vain amusements, useless correspondencies, and unprofitable conversations, which serve only to dissipate our minds, and indulge our self-love. By these means we shall find time for the service of God: all that is spent otherwise is lost.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Of the presence of God.

I. "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," *Gen.* xvii. 1. They are the words of God to Abraham, instructing us, that to live in the presence of God is the way to perfection. We never depart from that way, but by losing sight of God, and forgetting our dependence upon him. God is the light by which we see, and the end at which we should aim. In all the business and events of life, we

should consider only the order of his providence, and we shall maintain a sense of his presence in the midst of our business, as long as we have no other intention in performing it, but purely that of obeying him.

II. "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help," *Ps.* cxxi. 1. Looking only to our feet, will not be sufficient to deliver us from the many snares that surround us; the danger, indeed, is below, but the deliverance can come only from

above; thither must we lift up our eyes to him, from whom our help cometh. Our enemies encompass us incessantly; nor are we in less danger from within, by reason of our infirmity: we have no hope but in Jesus Christ, who has overcome the world for himself and for us: his omnipotence will support our infirmities.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

Of the love we ought to have for God.

I. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee," *Psal*, lxxiii. 25. When we say to God, that we love him with all our heart, 't is often a mere form of words without truth or meaning. Men learn it when they are young, and they continue to use it when they are grown up, without thinking of what they say. To love God is to

have no other will but his; to keep faithfully his law, and have in abhorrence all violation of it. To love God, is to love what Christ loved, poverty, humiliations, and sufferings; it is to hate what he hated, the world and its vanities: can we be said to love an object which we do not desire to resemble? To love God, is to desire to converse with him, to wish to go to him, to sigh and languish after him. That is but a feigned love, which does not desire to see the Beloved.

II. Our Lord "came to bring fire upon the earth," *Luke* xii. 49. and desired that fire might overspread it. Yet men live in a deadly coldness and indifference. They love money, buildings, titles, and a chimera they call reputation; they love even the meanest and most contemptible things; but divine love rarely finds a place in their hearts. Do thou, O Lord, vindicate thy right in us, notwithstanding our infidelities: let the fire of thy love extinguish all other fires. What can we see lovely out

of thee, which is not to be found in its full perfection in thee, O thou fountain of all good! grant us but the grace to love thee, and we shall then love thee only, thee eternally.

THIRTIETH DAY.

Sentiments of divine love.

I. "We love him, because he first loved us," 1 *John* iv. 19. But when shall we return love for love? When shall we seek after him who seeks after us, and who bears us in his arms? 'T is within his tenderly and fatherly bosom that we forget him: 't is through the sweetness of his gifts that we cease to think of him: what he gives us every moment, instead of tenderly affecting, does but serve t

amuse us. He is the fountain of all pleasures; the creatures are but the channels, and the channel makes us count the source for nothing. His immense love pursues us every where, and we continually get away from its pursuits! He is every where, and we see him no where! We think ourselves alone when we have none but him: he doeth all, and we rely not upon him in any thing! We think our affairs to be all desperate, when we have no resource left us but what his providence can

furnish, as if infinite and almighty love was able to do nothing! O monstrous folly! O subversion of the whole man!

II. Yet thou, O love, bearest with us! thou waitest on us with a patience without end, and even seemest by thy excess of patience to indulge our ingratitudes: even they who desire to love thee, love thee only for themselves, for their comfort, or their security. Where are they that love thee for thy own sake? Where are they that love thee,

because they were created for no other end but to love thee? They are unknown amongst men, and their names are written only in thy book. But to what purpose doth the world subsist, if we love not thee, and if we love thee not so as to be made sensible that the love of thee is above every other blessing? This was thy intention in producing without thee what is not thyself; thy design was to create beings, who, holding all from thee, should devote themselves only to thee.

ON THE WORDS,

"*Lord, teach us to pray.*,"

Luke xi. 1.

O Lord, I know not what I should ask of thee. Thou only knowest what I want: and thou lovest me better than I can love myself. O Lord, give to me, thy child, what is proper, whatsoever it may be. I dare not ask either crosses or comforts. I only present myself before thee: I open my heart to thee. Behold my wants, which I am ignorant of: but do thou behold,

and do according to thy mercy. Smite, or heal! Depress me, or raise me up: I adore all thy purposes, without knowing them: I am silent, I offer myself in sacrifice. I abandon myself to thee. No more any desire, but to accomplish thy will. Teach me to pray. Pray thou thyself in me.

FINIS.

for thou guide thee
Speed, thine God thine
Saviour; and make a
way for them, that
thine poor Mother has no
way for them. thine Lord
Jesus